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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (13 Mar 68) FOR OT RD 674133

15 March 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 214th  
Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1967 (U)

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*Kenneth G. Wickham*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 214TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
APO San Francisco 96370

AVGC-EC

15 November 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL) (RCS CSFOR - 65)  
for Quarterly Period Ending October 1967 (UIC WDX5AA-A)

TO: See Distribution

SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT UNIT ACTIVITIES

A. (C) GENERAL: The 214th Combat Aviation Battalion continued to provide responsive, highly effective aviation support to United States, Vietnamese, Australian and Thai Forces in the II Field Force, Vietnam area. UH-1's flew 154.5% and CH-47's flew 130.8% of programmed flying hours.

Continued emphasis and effort was placed on improvement of base facilities at Camp Martin Cox, Bearcat, Vietnam. These facilities include troop billets, BOQ's, personnel shelters, defensive positions and aircraft revetments.

The battalion received three additional assault helicopter companies from CONUS stations; the 190th, the 17th and the 195th. Shortly after arrival of the main body of the 190th AHC that unit was reassigned to the 145th CAB. Assignment of the 17th AHC and 195th AHC, both equipped with UH-1H aircraft, brings the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion to parity of personnel, equipment and operational capability with other combat aviation battalions in the 12th Combat Aviation Group.

Personnel infusion programs initiated in previous quarters for the 200th ASHC, the 191st AHC and 240th AHC were completed during this quarter.

FOR OT RD  
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GROUP 4  
DOWNGRADE AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFY AFTER 12 YEARS

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4

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**B. (U) MISSION:**

1. To provide aviation support to United States, Republic of Vietnam, and Free World Military Armed Forces in III and IV Corps Tactical Zones as directed by the Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam and the Commanding Officer, 12th Combat Aviation Group.

2. Commands and administers assigned and attached Army Aviation and support units.

**C. (C) ORGANIZATION:** (Annex A and B) Organization of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion during the reporting period included the following units with headquarters located as indicated:

1. 214th Cbt Avn Bn- Bearcat, RVN
2. 17th AHC- Long Binh, RVN
3. 191st AHC- Bearcat, RVN
4. 195th AHC- Long Binh, RVN
5. 200th ASHC- Bearcat, RVN
6. 240th AHC- Bearcat, RVN

**D. (U) COMMAND:**

1. On 6 September 1967, Cpt John Hanko assumed command of Headquarters Company, 214th Cbt Avn Bn, replacing Cpt Douglas L. Tolin.

2. On 18 September 1967, Major Glenn F. Hoffman assumed command of the 240th Assault Helicopter Company replacing Major William H. Williams.

**E. (C) PERSONNEL:**

1. Staff changes: The following changes in key staff personnel were made during the period:

a. LTC Charles S. Steen Jr. replaced LTC Bruce B. Campbell as Battalion Executive Officer (25 Sep 67).

2

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1  
5

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b. Captain James R. Myers replaced Major Ronal S. Stebbins as S2 (4 Sep 67).

c. Major Jimmy N. Moore replaced Major William C. Bradley as S4 (2 Sep 67).

d. Major Billy E. Sprague replaced Major Billy G. Haney as Battalion Safety Officer (Oct 67).

e. Major Leonard J. Redowick replaced Major Jimmy N. Moore as Maintenance Officer (Sep 67).

2. Administration: In this reporting period the battalion's authorized strength increased from 981 to 1593. The assigned strength was 1691 or 106 per cent, at the close of the period. The battalion had 121 personnel rotated to CONUS and 133 assigned from CONUS. There were 21 emergency leaves and three compassionate leaves granted. Due to the arrival of two companies and infusion, the personnel section in or out processed 1470 individuals.

3. Civic Action:

a. The 214th Combat Aviation Battalion sponsored six projects during the reporting period. Two projects are on a continuing basis.

b. Progress was shown in the following areas:

(1) Construction: Self-help work on domestic dwellings and livestock inclosures improved the living conditions and income potential in the hamlet of Tan Mai II.

(2) Commodity distribution: Commodities were available from three sources; Operation Kansas from the 9th Infantry Division, Voluntary contributions within the Battalion, and funds from the 9th Division G-5. These assets were used to raise the standard of living in a local hamlet and to further implement the Civic Action objectives.

3

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c. Commodities and construction material provided were:

### Commodities

12 Pigs	75 School Kits
1 Teeter-totter	2 Chalk Boards
1 Swing Set	2 Pencil Sharpeners
600 Pounds of Clothing	120 Pencils
4000 Pounds of Food	1 Box of Chalk
1000 Pounds of Bulgar (Grain supplement for pigs)	8 Chalk Erasers

### Construction Material

35000 Bricks	3500 Pounds of cement
4 Truck Loads of Sand	3 Truck Loads of Lumber

#### 4. Chaplain Activities:

a. The Chaplain's Section of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion became established during the quarter. The Chaplain's office was located in the Medical Dispensary and the Chapel fund was integrated with the 9th Division Chapel Fund. Worship services are conducted in the Officers' Mess and Catholic and Jewish services are provided by the Support Command and 9th Division Chaplains. Religious coverage for the 17th and 195th companies, located at Long Binh, is provided by the 199th Light Infantry Brigade.

b. A Chapel under construction in a central location, that we are building, will be ready by 1 January 1968. The Chapel will be shared with the 9th Infantry Division Support Command. Two offices will be utilized by the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion Chaplain's Section.

4

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7

c. Chaplain services performed during the quarter are as follows:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Occasions</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Group Worship	13	233
Bible Studies	1	8
Religious Films	13	650
Visits	133	
Counseling	153	
Off Post Projects	22	

5. Information:

The battalion command information program receives excellent support and support materials from all higher headquarters. Weekly command information classes are held by the companies, which utilize these materials plus current battalion and US Forces operations information to keep all troops aware of the war effort as it progresses. Information originating from this headquarters consists mainly of the "Weekly News from Cougar", the battalion's weekly newspaper. There were 165 hometown news releases of which 116 had photographs attached. Eight radio interviews were conducted by Armed Forces Radio Service which were broadcast by 1300 commercial stations in CONUS and Armed Forces stations all over the world. A twenty minute film was produced, "An Assault Helicopter Company in Action" which will be released in the near future. The theme of this film was the actions and thoughts of men in an Assault Helicopter Company. Inserts from this film have been extracted and telecast by over 300 TV stations in CONUS. These film extracts were taken to present individuals to their local areas.

6. Education:

The battalion education program increased its responsiveness when

5 **CONFIDENTIAL**

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4

the 9th Infantry Division opened a full service education center at Camp Martin Cox. This has eliminated the need for battalion personnel to travel to Long Binh Education Center to take tests and procure additional educational services. At present the battalion has over 70 personnel enrolled in various USAFI correspondence courses. During this period several of the troops have taken the High School GED Test. There should be increased educational interest and activity in the forthcoming period due to the wide-spread advertisement of the new educational facilities adjacent to the battalion area.

### 7, Morale:

a. The morale of the battalion has remained high. Basically the high state of morale can be attributed to a continuous period of successful operations requiring the total energy of the command to accomplish. The group and individual efforts have been recognized by numerous letters of commendation and appreciation particularly from the major commanders of the 9th Infantry Division, as well as an active and responsive awards and decorations program (See Annex C Statistical Summary).

b. Concurrently with these activities, the physical facilities within the battalion area have been rapidly improved with self help construction of semi-permanent barracks and provision of well equipped day rooms as well as facilities for 16 mm motion pictures in each company area.

c. The Commanding General, 9th Infantry Division, the senior command at Camp Bearcat has emphasized construction of a base camp community center. As a result of his emphasis many new facilities are available to members of the 214th CAB in an area adjacent to this battalion. They include an air conditioned PX, Library, Special Service Club, Snack Bar, Miniature Golf Course, Golf Driving Range and an Olympic size Swimming Pool.

6

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9

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8. Discipline:

Disciplinary actions remain low, indicating a high state of discipline within the command. Although the strength of the battalion has increased during this quarter, the incident rate has lowered. Records indicate the use of marijuana has increased in the Bearcat area. This command has convicted one individual for the possession of marijuana and eight individuals have been investigated by the CID. Article 15's numbered 22, ten Summary Courts Martial and three Special Courts Martial were held. No General Courts Martial were recorded. This represents a decline of 2 Courts Martial actions and 13 less Article 15's.

F. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

1. General:

a. In addition to normal functions, the S2 Section assisted 2 newly assigned units in establishing security, briefing, and orientation policies.

b. On 19 October 1967, the construction of a classified repository was completed.

2. Security:

a. A total of 1199 classified documents were processed by the S2 Section during this period.

b. The semi-annual inventory of classified documents was completed on 17 October 1967. A total of 3 SECRET documents were destroyed and one was down-graded in accordance with instructions from 12th Cbt Avn Gp. At the close of this period, 37 SECRET documents were on hand.

c. There were two security violations during this period which required formal investigations. Both violations concerned the loss of SOI's. Investigations were completed and forwarded to higher headquarters.

## CONFIDENTIAL

10

d. Files containing intelligence data on missing aircrew are being maintained. All information that could indicate the location or disposition of the crew members is being passed to the appropriate higher headquarters.

### 3. Cartographic Material:

Basic loads of maps were requisitioned, received and issued to two newly assigned units.

### G. (C) OPERATIONS AND TRAINING:

1. Hq & Hq Co, 214th Cbt Avn Bn, 191st AHC, 200th ASHC, and the 240th AHC were operational for 92 days during the reporting period. The 17th AHC and attachments spent 13 days training CONUS, 47 days POM, 8 days travel and 24 days in-country training. The 195th AHC and attachments spent 5 days training in CONUS, 66 days POM and 21 days travel. Anticipated operational date for the 17th AHC is 6 November 1967. Anticipated operational date for the 195th AHC is o/a 1 December 1967. During the period battalion UH-1 helicopters flew 17,358 hours and CH-47 helicopters flew 3,340 hours. Battalion gunships accounted for 50 VC KBA (BC). 47 UH-1's and 3 CH-47's were hit by enemy fire and a total of 11 crew members wounded. (See Annex C Statistical Summary)

### 2. Operations:

a. The 214th Cbt Avn Bn supported the 9th Inf Div on Operation Coronado II which started on 28 July and continued through 4 August 1967. As the enemy situation developed, additional Vietnamese and US Forces were committed. In the period 1-4 August 67, 9th Inf Div, 25th Inf Div, 7th ARVN Div and VNMC Task Force elements were flown into battle. Only light contact was experienced in the landing zones; however, all ground forces developed good ground contacts after assault landings were made. Well coordinated USAF strikes,

8

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artillery preparations, and ~~helicopter gunships assault fires~~ were instrumental in the success of all combat assault airlifts. Coordination with the various units was effected through the 9th Div Forward TOC where this battalion had located its forward BOC element. This placement proved highly effective. A high degree of standardization within 12th Cbt Avn Gp units was demonstrated when other assault helicopter companies were placed under the operational control of the 214th Cbt Avn Bn. This standardization was also evident in the reactions of the lifted units who proved well-versed in airmobile operations.

b. With the on-coming Vietnamese elections in early Sep, large scale operations were reduced in numbers and emphasis was shifted to wide spread security operations. Activity in every operational sector each day was the 9th Inf Div goal. As a result, aviation support in company and platoon size elements predominated the latter part of August and early weeks of September. Maximum use of eagle flights and saturation patrolling techniques produced increased low order enemy contacts. This was not without cost however as the smaller sized attacking forces induced the VC to fire more readily at approaching helicopters. (See Para b, Section II) Increased battle damage required more maintenance effort, particularly in the repair of skin damage. No aircraft were lost to the enemy.

c. On 14 August 1967 a night insertion of a rifle company of the 4/39th Infantry (9th Inf Div) into a landing zone at YT 143813 was completed by the 191st AHC. At 1920 hours, in the waning minutes of twilight, seven members of the 214th Pathfinder Detachment made a combat parachute jump into the LZ to check it for mines and booby traps and to set up a tactical lighted "T" for the approaching helicopters. Within 15 minutes the detachment commander, 1LT Donnie L. Haynie assembled his men and accomplished his assigned mission. The insertion was completed and the pathfinders were extracted at 1950 hours.

9  
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12

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d. On ~~29 August & on 10 from the 191st AHC~~ with 4 crewmembers and 2 maintenance personnel was reported missing. The aircraft was enroute to Bearcat from Black Horse after dark in a period of bad weather and is believed down in the jungle SW of Black Horse. Extensive search operations were conducted through 2 Sep 67. No trace of the missing aircraft or crew was found until 17 Sep 67, although units operating in the area continued to search during over-flights. On 17 Sep 67 an element of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment found parts of the log book from the missing aircraft and pieces of an aircraft radio in a VC base camp at XS 403877. To date no further evidence of wreckage has been found.

e. From 28 Sep 67 through the end of the reporting period, this battalion has supported the 18th ARVN Div with one assault helicopter company each day and has furnished a liaison officer who assists the division in planning airmobile requirements. A spirit of cooperation and harmony has prevailed and excellent rapport established. Since the division had only occasional aviation support previously, coordination and planning in great detail were necessary to achieve success in the initial operations. Constant improvement in loading and exiting of aircraft has been observed as the units of the division gained in experience. The concept has been accepted and is now being employed with enthusiasm by the Division Commander and his staff through to battalion commanders.

3. Training:

a. During the period in-country orientation and crew training was conducted for the 17th AHC, 190th AHC (145th CAB) and the 242d ASHC (269th CAB). This training consists of a proficiency check ride in the aircraft assigned; and area orientation to include approaches to heavily used airfields and helipads, location of hospitals, useful landmarks, restricted areas,

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13  
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artillery warning system, flight following, and combat assaults and combat support missions with an established unit. This program enables each aviator to get a minimum of 25 hours with the established unit which gives the new unit operational and standardized flight personnel very quickly. Also it enables the established unit an opportunity to rest some of its flight personnel.

b. Training assistance was provided to the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Regiment by the 200th ASHC, 191st and 240th AHC and the 214th Pathfinder Detachment. Formal classes on utilization of CH-47 helicopters and rigging of loads were presented and practice combat assaults into relatively secure areas, were conducted. The RTAVR proved both enthusiastic and receptive to all training presented.

c. Preparation was begun in September and October to conduct transition training for Thai aviators and maintenance personnel in the UH-1. Twelve aviators and 28 aircraft mechanics are to be attached to the battalion for a 4 month period commencing 15 November 1967. After transition flight training is complete, the Thai aviators will fly operational missions with the 191st and 240th AHC. Organizational and field maintenance personnel will receive on-the-job training during the same period. Administrative support will be provided by the RTAVR located at Bearcat.

d. The 214th Pathfinder Detachment assisted artillery units and support units by conducting training on rigging sling loads for CH-47 airlifts. The 9th Infantry Division and the 199th Light Infantry Brigade (Separate) were contacted and offered training assistance. The response was immediate with classes scheduled throughout the period at the convenience of the requesting unit. These training sessions are considered a prime factor in the continued low frequency of dropped loads due to faulty rigging experienced by the 200th ASHC

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H.(C) LOGISTICS:

1. Summary of S-4 Activities:

a. Supply:

(1) During this period normal supply activities were conducted by units of this battalion. Shortage of one(1) UH-1C and four (4) UH-1D aircraft in the 191st Assault Helicopter Company is the only major shortage affecting unit readiness capability.

(2) Body armor and ballistic helmets are not available for the units recently arriving from CONUS. An initial transfer of body armor and ballistic helmets is being undertaken to provide each unit with sufficient body armor for all crews during combat assault missions and ballistic helmets for all armed helicopter crews.

(3) Routine repair parts supply continues to be slow. Continued liaison with support activities has eliminated some shortages; however, unless an item of equipment is deadlined for parts, the repair parts system is not responsive. This results in an increasing number of shortcomings, especially on vehicles, decreasing their mission essential effectiveness.

(4) Installation property continues to be very slow in arriving. The long lead time, up to six months, on administrative equipment such as desks and typewriters greatly effects the administrative capability of all units. This same delay in receiving mess hall equipment and billeting equipment has an adverse effect on morale and comfort of the troops.

(5) There is still a critical shortage of power generating equipment at Bearcat and Long Binh areas. Present generator assets cannot provide sufficient power to operate recently received medical equipment and mess hall equipment. Approved work orders have been processed to alleviate this

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1  
13

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problem; however, a shortage of 100 kw generators exists with RVN.

b. Construction:

(1) During this period all building construction at Bearcat was accomplished by self-help. In this period 3 two-story barracks, 3 operations buildings and one 20 x 40 Quonset hut (S4 Office) were constructed. A 30 man BOQ is expected to be completed by 15 November 1967. Utilizing limited engineer assistance, 3 bunkers, 80 helicopter revetments, a number of personnel shelters and temporary structures, one hangar and 4 Adams huts were completed. It is estimated that 34,500 US Forces man hours and 600 hours local hire man hours were used on construction projects by this battalion during the reporting period.

(2) Materials are available in short supply; however, adequate tools and trained personnel are not available.

(3) At Long Binh the minimum engineer requirements were provided for the preparation of company areas for the 17th AHC and 195th AHC. At the close of this period one mess hall and one shower/latrine facility had been constructed. Construction of helicopter revetments for the 17th AHC and 195th AHC are progressing at a very slow pace due to the lack of engineer assistance.

c. Maintenance:

(1) The equipment serviceability profile for the battalion during this period was 91% GREEN, 4% AMBER, and 5% RED, indicating outstanding accomplishment by all maintenance personnel.

(2) Aircraft availability for UH-1D and UH-1H aircraft has exceeded the USARV standard of 80% during this period. Availability rate for UH-1C aircraft has been slightly below USARV standard due to the varied problems associated with the 540 rotor system.

13

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16

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(3) ~~Availability rates~~ for CH-47A aircraft were well above USARV standards during the initial portion of this reporting period. However, continued operations exceeding 1000 hours per month, coupled with excessive EDP rates, has reduced the availability rate to slightly below the USARV standard.

I. (C) SIGNAL:

Command Post Communications: During this reporting period command post communications were enhanced with increased radio, teletype and telephone capability. BOC connection to the Hurricane TOC switch is a great asset to the battalion S3 Section. This direct line to Army Aviation elements, higher headquarters and ground commanders, enables the BOC to effect immediate liaison concerning missions and/or changes in missions. During September this battalion established a back-up for the Group on-line teletype, utilizing the VSC-2.

J. (U) AVIATION SAFETY:

1. During the reporting period, this battalion has placed ever-increasing emphasis on aircraft accident prevention. New programs and procedures were initiated. A battalion Aviation Safety SOP was published and disseminated. The company aviation safety officers are being allotted time at each company briefing to discuss accident prevention topics. Safety bulletin boards were constructed and publications concerning safety are readily available to all pilots.

2. Aircraft Accidents: The battalion had four major aircraft accidents giving an accident rate of 39.9.

K. (C) MEDICAL:

1. Summary of medical activities:

a. The combined medical facility consisting of the 214th Cbt Avn Bn Dispensary and 772d OA Medical Detachment supported three operational

14  
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17

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aviation companies and their attached units. The combining of the two organizations into one facility has enabled the medical personnel to provide complete and thorough medical support. In the situation where a battalion headquarters and up to three aviation companies are co-located it was found that the medical support available from the combination of a battalion medical section and an OA Detachment is completely adequate.

b. The medical section closely monitored all aviators accumulating 90 flying hours in a 30 day period. This included a short physical examination and discussion with the aviator regarding possible signs of fatigue. It was found to be of little benefit in that the aviators were usually exempt from flying the previous day or several hours before being seen by the surgeon. Only one aviator was "grounded" because of fatigue over the preceeding three months.

c. The medical section treated an average of 25 patients a day. The most common disease entities seen were upper respiratory infections, ear, nose and throat disorders and dermatological disorders. One case of infectious hepatitis was seen. There were no other cases of communicable diseases seen.

d. The venereal disease rate in the battalion has been quite low and reached an all time low in October with only 10 cases.

e. A one hour lecture on first aid and the use of the first aid kit was given to all crew members of the 191st AHC, 240th AHC, and 200th ASHC by the battalion flight surgeon. The lecture will be given to the 17th AHC and 195th AHC prior to their operational date, and repeated to all units periodically.

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## SECTION II

### Commanders Observations and Recommendations

#### PART I

#### OBSERVATIONS (LESSONS LEARNED)

##### A. (C) PERSONNEL:

##### 1. Item: Inadequacy of TOE Personnel authorization:

Discussion: The General Order which modifies the TOE and the TOE do not provide sufficient personnel to perform the required mission of the battalion headquarters in combat in Vietnam. Specific areas where inadequacies exist are in the Personnel Section, S1 Section, and Mess Section. Each aviation company in combat must maintain a twenty-four hour operation. The company Mess and Operations Sections are not staffed with sufficient personnel to operate on a twenty-four hour basis. The assault helicopter companies are not authorized sufficient personnel to support a flying hour program in excess of 2000 hours and at the same time provide their own security. It has been necessary in Vietnam for several years to maintain aviation unit personnel strength above 105 per cent. This requirement has applied to assault support helicopter companies also. On 29 September 1967, justification of specific position requirements for all units of the battalion was submitted. On 28 October 1967, 140 b (Schedule X) justification was submitted for a TDA Security Detachment, as a solution to this critical problem. Directives have been issued to the effect that units will be reduced to TOE strength by 31 December 1967. This will have a drastic and adverse impact upon mission accomplishment, morale and esprit.

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19  
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Observation: ~~Unit~~ ~~on~~ ~~units~~ should be reorganized under a TOE

that is realistically based upon the accumulative experience of the past three years under combat conditions in Vietnam. Until this can be accomplished, relief must be given in the form of excess personnel authorization, MTOE, special TDA unit authorization, or by a reduction in the flying hours committed.

2. Item: Infusion Program:

Discussion: Because the battalion and its subordinate units have arrived in country within the last eight months, an infusion program is under progress to eliminate a DEROS problem. Reluctance of some unit commanders to infuse has been strong. This has been overcome by strong command guidance and by having commanders and their First Sergeants attend meetings to negotiate the personnel (trade offs). The battalion S1 in coordination with the Group S1 has set the guidelines in terms of dates and numbers of personnel to be infused. Continuous monitoring is necessary to insure that a cross section of skills, experience, and key personnel are included by the company commanders. The S1 must also act as a coordinating agency between higher and lateral headquarters and the Personnel Section to resolve problems that invariably arise. It became apparent that a Memo for Record and Letter of Agreement be initiated at each infusion meeting as personnel involved tend to forget specifics of each transaction. Through this means, misunderstanding and problems can be reduced. Another method of eliminating the DEROS problem of newly arrived units is through an aggressive extension program. The six month extension program is well publicized and is encouraged to the maximum. Personnel are encouraged to extend by a month or more so as to avoid infusion. Due to pride in the unit, success with this selling point is considerable. Another extension consideration used is to encourage career and married personnel to extend to the end of the school year

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er school semester, or ~~to extend into December to be home~~ with thirty days leave at Christmas and New Years! The 90 day curtailment of military service commitment is used to encourage personnel to extend when they can benefit due to date of ETS. 20

Observation: Careful explanation of the infusion program to all concerned and inclusion of unit leaders in the conduct and mechanics of the program will eliminate much resistance and encourage cooperation. The aggressive promotion of advantages accrued through extension will eliminate much personnel turbulence, improve unit efficiency and morale and save money by increasing tour length in Vietnam.

B. (C) OPERATIONS:

1. Item: Employment of gunships with platoon (5 slicks) sized airmobile operations.

Discussion: During the period covered by this report the US 9th Inf Div significantly increased the number of eagle flights conducted in the TAOR. As the use of this tactic increased, a corresponding increase in the number of aircraft hits was also noted. During one 30 day period when units of the battalion were engaged in eagle flights operations 50% of the time, 74% of the total aircraft hits occurred when two gunships were protecting 5 slicks. In contrast to this only 13% of the total aircraft hits occurred when 4 gunships were protecting a flight of slicks. This latter type mission accounted for 45% of the flying time. Single ship missions sustained 13% of the total aircraft hits and accounted for 5% of the total flying time.

Observation: The assets of an airmobile company should not be split between different ground units. Four gunships should be available to the Air Mission Commander during eagle flight operations. The remaining 5 slick

18  
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1/ aircraft can be utilized ~~in a standby~~ status ready to lift a reaction force to reinforce eagle flight troops committed on the ground. A substantial reduction in aircraft hits should result when 4 gunships are used.

2. Item: Suppressive fire by gunships in support of troop lift A/C on take off from LZ's and PZ's.

Discussion: Experience showed that a high percentage of A/C hits occurred on take off from PZ's and LZ's. This held true even though the slick A/C were using full suppression from their door gunners and the gunships were firing in the area to the side of the take off path. In an effort to reduce the number of hits taken on take off, the gunships initially suppressed the ground path to be used during take off from the forward edge of the LZ or PZ for a distance of 500 to 1000 meters. After the lift ships reached an altitude of 100 to 200 feet the gunships then placed their fire immediately in front of the lead slick and under the remaining slicks in the formation. The door gunners on the slick A/C placed their fire to the flanks of the formation. Suppressive fire as described by the gunships and door gunners was continued until the slick reached an absolute altitude of approximately 500 feet.

Observation: The tactics of employing gunships to suppress the ground track of the troop carrying helicopters and the door gunners suppressing to the flanks materially reduced the number of hits taken on take off and climb to altitude. Care must be exercised; however, when employing 2.75 rocket and 40 mm grenade ammunition over areas completely covered by large trees. Bursts in the tree tops can cause shrapnel or other debris to strike escorted A/C.

3. Item: Selection of Intermediate LZ's when an extraction is planned.

Discussion: A problem, which has been encountered by this battalion, is the planning for and executing a march through jungle areas so as



12

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to arrive on time at ~~a suitable extraction area~~. Most frequently the ground commanders have over-estimated the distance that can be traveled in rugged terrain in a space of time. As a result, it has been necessary to perform extractions from intermediate PZ's which were marginal at best.

Observation: Whenever a unit is inserted and an extraction is planned at a pre-designated time, intermediate PZ's should be selected that would facilitate the mission of the ground commander and the air mission commander.

4. Item: Deployment of Pathfinders in LZ's via paradrop.

Discussion: On 14 August 1967 a night insertion of a rifle company of the 4/39th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division into a landing zone at YT 143813 was completed by the 191st AHC. At 1920 hours, in the waning minutes of twilight, seven members of the 214th Cbt Avn Bn Pathfinder Detachment made a combat parachute jump into the LZ to check it for mines and booby traps and to set up a tactical lighted "T" for the approaching helicopters. The Pathfinders were equipped with the standard T-10 troop parachute for this jump. Winds stronger than those forecast caused the entire detachment to land approximately 400 meters North of the LZ, which caused a 15 minute delay in the operation and unnecessarily endangering the pathfinders during their ground move to the LZ.

Observation: The T-10M parachute should be included in the TO&E of all pathfinder detachments. This parachute is of the manoverable type and would enable personnel to jump into small and confined DZ/LZ's regardless of unforecasted meteorological conditions.

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13  
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C.(C) TRAINING AND ORGANIZATION:

1. Item: Deployment of units into unprepared areas:

Discussion: Due to the heavy rainfall and the heavy workload imposed on supporting engineer units, the essential construction requirements for the 17th and 195th AHC was not completed when the units arrived. Particularly affecting the unit operational dates are completion of maintenance and parking areas. When units are moved into an area where the engineers are still working, construction efforts are slowed. Aircraft parking areas were temporarily available for the 17th AHC in Bien Hoa due to displacement of a similar unit on a temporary assignment in the II Corps area. A similar arrangement is planned for the 195th aircraft when they arrive. This was not the result of planning, but one of circumstance.

Observation: Realistic deployment dates should be developed considering all aspects of unit stationing and ramifications of weather on construction effort.

2. Item: Size and departure date of deploying unit advance parties.

Discussion: The size of the advance party of the 17th AHC was limited to 10 personnel. They did not arrive until 5 days prior to the first increment of the main body. A larger advanced party would have enabled it to do much more in the way of erecting tentage, preparing the mess hall for use and making other preparations for receiving the main body. Necessary assistance to this unit was provided by the 191st AHC. This meant taking personnel away from projects and work areas of its own. Due to lack of space on a surface vessel, the advance party of the 195th AHC numbered approximately 30 personnel. This proved far more satisfactory and enabled the 195th AHC to help itself to a far greater extent than was the 17th AHC.

24

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Observation: Spaces available to advance parties of deploying aviation units should be increased to 30. In addition, the advance party should deploy a minimum of 2 weeks in advance of the main body. An exception to this is in those rare cases where the new unit moves directly into established facilities vacated by another similar unit. In this case an advance party of 10 personnel and 7 days lead would probably prove adequate.

D. (U) INTELLIGENCE: None

E. (C) LOGISTICS:

1. Item: Arrival of the 17th AHC.

Discussion: The phasing of the arrival of the 17th AHC from CONUS was not conducive to efficient resource management. The unit's aircraft arrived in country two weeks before TO&E equipment arrived. The unit was incapable of performing proper maintenance on 31 aircraft without a maintenance area or tools and equipment.

Observation: Unit equipment should be processed for deployment from CONUS to arrive and be available for immediate pick up by the main body on their arrival in country. This would allow maximum utilization of personnel for the construction of the base camp immediately upon arrival. The aircraft should be programmed to arrive two weeks following the arrival of the main body, giving the unit an opportunity to gain training experience prior to becoming fully operational.

2. Item: Availability rate for CH-47A Aircraft

Discussion: During this reporting period the availability rate for CH-47A aircraft fell below USARV standard. The prime causes were the non-availability of repair parts and man hour requirements due to continued over flying the programmed 800 hours per company per month. Logistical support and

22

**CONFIDENTIAL**

23-1

**CONFIDENTIAL**

TOE's are not computed to support unlimited flying hours each month.

Observation: To ensure sufficient repair parts and adequate maintenance man hours for the CH-47A aircraft, the logistical base and TOE's must either be increased or the flying time must be rationed to stay within the programmed flying time.

F. (U) SIGNAL: None

G. (U) MEDICAL:

Item: Acute vs Chronic Fatigue:

Discussion: It was found on several occasions, where an accident was caused by pilot error, the pilot had flown 4-6 consecutive days and several hours immediately preceeding the accident. As a result of these findings it is felt that acute fatigue is more directly related to aircraft accidents than chronic fatigue of the 90 hour nature.

Observation: A closely monitored evaluation of acute fatigue by the platoon leaders, company commanders and flight surgeons is of greater benefit than the present program.

H. (U) Aviation Safety:

Item: UH-1 accident experience:

Discussion: Although a majority of the flying hours of the aviators in an assault helicopter company are spent under the positive control of an air mission commander, most accidents and incidents are experienced during single ship missions. Individual aviators recently graduated from USAAVNS accumulate approximately 1000 flying hours in a year. This cannot be equated in experience gained in accumulating the same flight hours over a period of several years.

Observation: Continuing command emphasis on safety and flight planning are necessary if judgement error accidents are to be reduced.

23

**CONFIDENTIAL**

26

PART II  
RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. (U) PERSONNEL: None
- B. (U) OPERATIONS: None
- C. (U) TRAINING - ORGANIZATION:

1. Spaces available to advance parties of units deploying to Vietnam be increased to 30 and the advance party arrive in country a minimum of two weeks in advance of the main body.

2. T-10M parachute be made part of TO&E for pathfinder detachments.

- D. (U) INTELLIGENCE: None
- E. (U) LOGISTICS: Unit equipment be processed for deployment from CONUS to arrive and be available for immediate pick-up by the main body on their arrival in country.
- F. (U) SIGNAL: None
- G. (U) MEDICAL: A study be conducted to determine the effect of acute fatigue versus chronic fatigue in conjunction with the 90 hour and 140 hour flying limitations.
- H. (U) AVIATION SAFETY: None

*Robert J. Standley*

ROBERT J. STANDLEY  
LTC, CE  
Commanding

ANNEXES:

A-214th Cbt Avn Bn Structure  
B-214th Cbt Avn Bn Troop List  
C-Statistical Summary  
~~D-Distribution~~ Withdrawn, Hqs, DA

27  
AVGC-SC (15 Nov 67)

1st Ind

24 DEC 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL) for Period ending  
31 October 1967 (RCS-CSFOR-65) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO 96266

18 November 1967

THRU: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96266

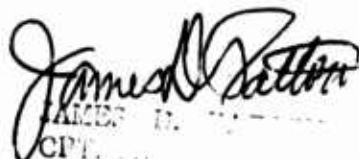
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20301

1. (U) One copy of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion's Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL) (RCS-CSFOR-65) for period ending 31 October 1967, is forwarded in compliance with USARV Regulation 1-19, dated 3 November 1967.

2. (U) This headquarters has reviewed subject report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion with the following comments:

Reference: Section I, paragraph J. 2., page 14. Records this headquarters indicate there were seven (7) accidents during this period giving an accident rate of 32.2.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
JAMES H. [unclear]  
CPT, [unclear]  
Asst. [unclear]

28

AVFBC-RE-H (15 Nov 67) 2d Ind 24 DEC 1967  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending  
31 October 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFU TO) (U)

DA HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266

THRU: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, ATTN: AVBA-C, APO 96307

Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DH, APO 96375

Commander-In-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Subject report is forwarded.

2. This command has reviewed the attached report and concurs with  
the comments and recommendations with the following exceptions:

a. Section II, p 16, para A,1, Inadequacy of TOE Personnel  
authorization. The problem of unit strength authorizations is acute  
throughout Vietnam and is recognized by higher headquarters. A solution  
is not anticipated at this time.

b. Section II, p 18, para B,1, Employment of gunships with  
platoon (5 slicks) sized airmobile operations. It is more desirable to  
employ four gunships instead of two to escort a flight of five slicks.  
However, in light of the present ratio of helicopter assets to ground  
units, maximum utilization of aviation resources sometimes requires  
employment of a company by platoon and using one light fire team with  
each platoon. The terminology used in this report is misleading. An  
eagle flight is not restricted to a flight of five slicks. It is a  
heliborne infantry force on air alert ready to perform immediate reaction  
missions for a ground commander. The term eagle flight as used in this  
report is an airmobile combat assault lifting troops into an LZ in which  
the enemy has the capability of offering resistance during approach,  
landing or departure. The decision to employ only five slicks and one  
light fire team depends upon the desires of the ground commander and  
the air mission commander. After being advised of the risks involved,  
the ground force commander must decide what will be acceptable for  
mission accomplishment.

c. Section II, p 21, para C,1, Deployment of units into un-  
prepared areas. This headquarters concurs with the recommendation that  
realistic deployment dates should be developed based on the availability

29  
AVFBC-RE-H (15 Nov 67)

24 DEC 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending  
31 October 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFU TO) (U)

of facilities for incoming units. In this case an engineer estimate made in August 1967 by the constructing unit revealed that facilities could not be completed in time to permit occupancy by the unit upon arrival in-country. Based on this estimate arrangements were made to temporarily station the unit at another location until the facilities under construction were completed. Unit deployment dates are established by Department of the Army about 12 months in advance of the unit's initial warning order. Some delays in minimum required essential construction cannot be avoided due to unpredictable changes in the tactical situation. The sponsoring unit, however, can assist a great deal in minimizing the effects of such changes by submitting the units requirements in accordance with USARV Regulation 220-10.


d. Section II, p 21, para C,2, Size and departure date of deploying unit advance parties. The size of the advance party can be varied upon recommendation by the sponsoring unit in accordance with USARV Reg 220-10.

e. Section II, p 22, para E,1, Arrival of the 17th AHC. II FFORCEV cannot control arrival of unit TOE equipment.

f. Section II, p 24, para C,1, Advance parties. See para 2d above.

g. Section II, p 24, para C,2, Pathfinders detachments. A request for change to the detachment's equipment authorization should be submitted to USARV.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
R. E. WAMFSGANSS  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG



30

AVBA-C (15 Nov 67) 3rd Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (OILL) (RCS CSFOL-65) for  
Quarterly Period Ending October 1967 (UIC WDX5AA-A) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, AFO 96384

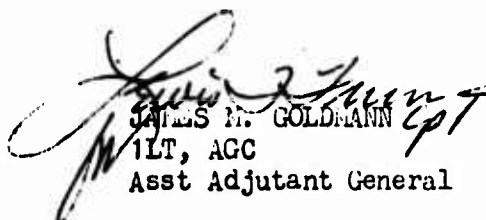
DEC 28 1967

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, AFO 96375  
Commander in Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOF-JT, AFO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army  
(ACSFOR DA), Washington, D.C. 20310

This headquarters has reviewed subject report of the 214th Combat Aviation  
Battalion, considers it to be adequate and concurs with the contents as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
JAMES H. GOLDMANN CPT  
1LT, AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

31  
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AVHGC-DST (15 Nov 67) 4th Ind (C)  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned (ORLL) (RCS CSFOR-65) for  
Quarterly Period Ending October 1967 (UIC WDX5AA-A)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 25 JAN 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,  
APO 96558

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1967 from Headquarters, 214th Combat Aviation Battalion (DX5A) as indorsed.

2. (C) Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning inadequacy of TOE personnel authorizations, page 16, paragraph A1; and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 2e: Concur with 2d Indorsement. No spaces are available within USARV to augment any TOE unit without drawdown. Army Aviation MTOE's are presently in DA for study. This reorganization will be the subject of further meetings between the DA Standardization Team, USARV Force Development, and USARV Aviation Section.

b. Reference item concerning deployment of units into unprepared areas, page 21, paragraph C1; and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 2c. Deployment schedules are based primarily upon tactical requirements and DA's capability to provide required assets requested by this command. It is recognized that construction during the rainy season is more difficult; however, this has no impact upon the tactical requirement for deploying needed assets into RVN as expeditiously as possible.

c. Reference item concerning size and departure date of deploying unit's advance parties, page 21, paragraph C2; page 24, paragraph C1; and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 2d. It is DA policy that advance party of a company size unit will not exceed 10% of authorized strength and will arrive in RVN 5-7 days prior to arrival of the main body. Advance parties are composed of key officers and NCO's whose purpose is to assist the gaining command in integrating the new unit into operational and logistical systems, identify unit cargo, and assist in reception of the main body. It is improper for a sponsor unit to utilize an advance party to erect base camp facilities. USARV Regulation 220-10, "Sponsorship of Incoming Units" outlines the responsibilities of the sponsor unit.

d. Reference item concerning arrival of the 17th AHC, page 22, paragraph E1: Nonconcur. It is desirable that the arrival date of unit aircraft coincide with the arrival of the unit's main body. Arrival of the aircraft two weeks after arrival of the main body would cause a corresponding delay in the unit's operational date. No adjustment to the deployment program is recommended.

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32

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AVHGC-DST (15 Nov 67) 4th Ind (C)  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned (ORLL) (RCS CSFOR-65) for  
Quarterly Period Ending October 1967 (UIC WDX5AA-A)

e. Reference item concerning availability rate for CH-47A aircraft, page 22, paragraph E2: Concur. In the area of maintenance TOE's, no mention is made of personnel shortages and lack of experience as contributing factors to insufficient man-hour availability. Action has been initiated by this headquarters to obtain contract civilian maintenance personnel to assist in accomplishing the CH-47 maintenance work load. Repair parts provisioning is based primarily on an established Flying Hour Program. Currently, it is 50 hours per month for CH-47's in USAFV. If sufficient evidence indicates this to be unrealistic, a review will be made to determine if revision is necessary. In the meantime, continued close coordination between the tactical unit commander and the supporting aviation unit commander should insure that use of aircraft is limited to only that essential for the accomplishment of valid missions.

3. (U) A copy of this indorsement will be furnished to the reporting unit through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



D. E. TUMAN  
Major, AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

Copies Furnished:

HQ, 214th CAB  
HQ, 1st Avn Bde

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33  
GPOP-DT(15 Nov 67) (U) 5th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 October  
1967 from HQ, 214th Cbt Avn Bn (UIC: WDX5AA) (RCS CSFOR-65)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96358 6 MAR 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff For Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

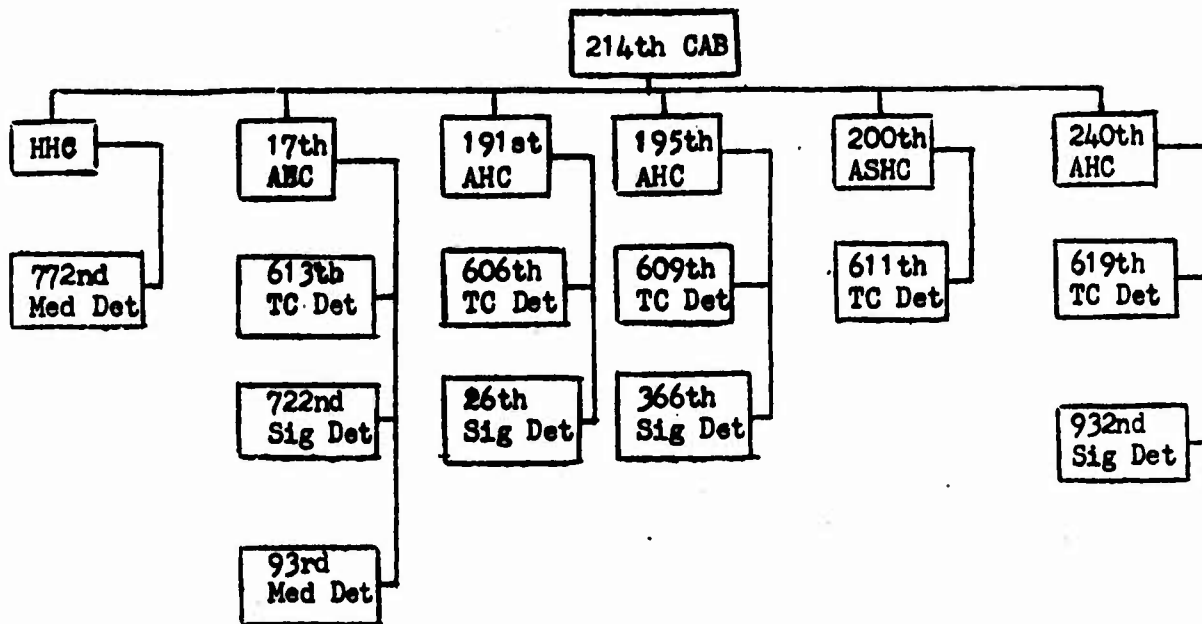
1. This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding  
indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.
2. During Phase II Standardization Conference conduct at Headquarters  
USARV, 15 - 23 February 1968, issues involved in Army Aviation MTOE's  
were resolved. A total of 99 Aviation Units of the 1st Aviation  
Brigade were standardized involving an increase of 4,856 military  
personnel spaces.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

  
K. F. OSBOURN  
MAJ, AGC  
Asst AG

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214th COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION



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214th Combat Aviation Battalion Troop List

36

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Location</u>
<u>214th Cbt Avn Bn</u>	Bearcat
Hqs & Hqs Co	Bearcat
772d Medical Detachment	Bearcat
<u>17th AHC</u>	Long Binh
613th TC Detachment	Long Binh
722d Sig Detachment	Long Binh
93d Medical Detachment	Long Binh
<u>191st AHC</u>	Bearcat
606th TC Detachment	Bearcat
26th Signal Detachment	Bearcat
<u>195th AHC</u>	Long Binh
609th TC Detachment	Long Binh
366th Signal Detachment	Long Binh
<u>200th ASHC</u>	Bearcat
611th TC Detachment	Bearcat
<u>240th AHC</u>	Bearcat
619th TC Detachment	Bearcat
932d Signal Detachment	Bearcat

ANNEX B

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37

ANNEX C Statistical Summary

	<u>VC KBA</u>		<u>VC STRUCTURES</u>		<u>VC SAMPANS</u>	
	<u>CONF</u>	<u>EST</u>	<u>DEST</u>	<u>DAM</u>	<u>DEST</u>	<u>DAM</u>
AUG	21	32	14	26	31	2
SEP	12	4	22	12	3	2
OCT	17	6	5	17	3	5
TOTALS	50	42	41	55	37	9

	<u>COMBAT ASSAULTS</u>		<u>DIRECT COMBAT SUPPORT</u>		<u>FLYING HOURS</u>	
	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>TONS</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>TONS</u>	<u>UH-1</u>	<u>CH-47</u>
AUG	24758	921	20993	4429	6113	1111
SEP	26434	1670	14754	3469	5403	989
OCT	31850	1608	21607	6796	5842	1240

Awards and Decorations

	<u>Submitted</u>	<u>Received</u>	
Silver Star	1	0	....
LOM	1	2	(1 received from another Hqs)
DFC	49	12	
SM	1	0	
BS	23	21	
BS"V"	6	1	
AM	1595	764	
AM"V"	83	61	
ACM	24	19	
ACM"V"	7	6	
PH	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>	
Total	1799	893	

34

ANNEX C

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author) OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Confidential	
		2b. GROUP 4	
3. REPORT TITLE Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 214th Combat Aviation Battalion (U)			
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates) Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Aug - 31 Oct 1967			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name) CO, 214th Combat Aviation Battalion			
6. REPORT DATE 15 November 1967		7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 35	7b. NO. OF REFS
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c.			
d.			
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT			
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES N/A		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT			

35

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Security Classification